



October 17, 2016 | 9:00 – 11:15 am  
10 Park Plaza | Conference Rooms 5 and 6  
(directly behind the security desk on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

## **SUMMARY**

### **Action Items**

- ALL to distribute public engagement publicity in networks (CBI will send publicity documents to the Working Group to distribute)
- CBI to invite Working Group to public meeting presentation “dry run”
- CBI to reach out to Cities and MassDOT to determine representation at November public meeting
- ALL provide feedback on discussion group invitee list (CBI will send document to Working Group)
- MAPC summarize deltas in demographics and employment from no-build to planned growth scenario by early November, and assist Working Group in “crosswalking” from no-build to planned growth scenario as needed.
- MAPC to deliver planned growth scenario inputs by October 31
- Modeling staff to model:
  - Sullivan Square and Austin Street underpasses down to the intersection level to compare against the non-underpass scenarios in the no-build
  - Preliminary regional high-level modeling of residential and commercial parking restrictions to determine the broad effects on mode shift and other factors.
- Project staff to further develop options for the first round of transit, TDM, and bike/pedestrian alternative components and report back to Working Group at November 7 meeting

## **Discussion**

### **Introduction**

Pat Field (CBI) reviewed the agenda and previewed the topics the group would cover during the discussion. The Working Group approved the September meeting summary.

### **Public Engagement**

Carri Hulet (CBI) updated the group on the public engagement subcommittee’s activities.

### **Website:**

The group is using two websites. One is hosted by MassDOT and is simpler and more focused on the activities of the Working Group itself. The second is hosted by MAPC and is more

adaptable and focused on engaging the public, with more options to incorporate the survey and social media outreach into the website.

#### Survey:

Based on Working Group feedback, the survey was streamlined down to five questions focused on problems and proposed solutions, with optional demographic questions at the end. The survey will be publicly launched in mid-October.

#### Public Meeting:

The public meeting will be held on November 9, 6 PM at the State Transportation Building at 10 Park Plaza in Boston.

Ms. Hulet previewed the sections of the public meeting:

1. Open house with topic stations where members of the public can interact with data from the study and discuss with staff
2. Presentation on the study approach
3. Breakout discussion groups with facilitators and note-takers, where more detailed feedback from the public will be gathered

Secretary Pollack will no longer be able to join the meeting. The subcommittee will be reaching out to the Cities and MassDOT to determine how they will be represented at the meeting. Working Group members will be invited to an optional meeting to give feedback on a “dry run” of the public meeting presentation.

#### Discussion groups:

Ms. Hulet explained the plan to run discussion groups with organizations, advocates, and particular groups of people affected by changes in the study area to get more in-depth feedback from them. These groups may have particular expertise or experience the subcommittee wants to target, or they may represent groups whose feedback is less likely to be captured through the other public engagement strategies. Ms. Hulet asked the Working Group to be ready to provide feedback on a list of groups that the subcommittee will target to help fill in any gaps, make note of any connections Working Group members have with these groups, and express any interest in participating in the discussions.

#### Publicity:

The subcommittee plans to launch the public engagement website and make announcements about the meeting and survey in the week following this meeting. Ms. Hulet asked Working Group members to be ready to distribute announcements to their own networks.

#### Synthesis of public engagement:

Ms. Hulet explained that input from the public from these different strategies would be synthesized and reported back to the Working Group for use in its deliberations.

#### **Development of Alternative 1: Planned Growth**

Tim Reardon (MAPC) presented to the Working Group the assumptions going into the model for “Land Use A,” which the group agreed to call the “planned growth” scenario. He explained

that the planned growth scenario used the same transportation and TDM assumptions that went into the no-build scenario but used different land use assumptions.

The land use allocation model is a predictive behavioral model in which households and employment firms compete for a finite quantity of available real estate. Assumptions are set based on the amount of development permitted, real estate development in the pipeline, and the attractiveness of each zone based on a number of variables. However, the model is not deterministic and anticipated growth may not occur if zones outcompete one another.

The planned growth land use assumptions differ from those in the no-build in that they are based not just on development in the RTP, but also on planning for development and visioning happening in the communities in the study area. The planned growth scenario holds constant the regional totals for population, households, and employment, but lifts envelopes on growth within municipalities. Development projections for Everett, Somerville, and Boston reflect current plans, new zoning assumptions, and stated growth objectives from the Cities.

The scenario also does not discount planned developments in the study area as the no-build scenario does; instead, the model is designed to account for development in some zones outcompeting others. The planned growth scenario maintains the following assumptions which are also assumed in the no-build scenario: there are no subsidies to preserve opportunities for low-income households; there is no adjustment to the existing auto-ownership model; there are no changes to the pedestrian environment variable. Mr. Reardon clarified that these assumptions were maintained in order to run the model without any additional interventions in order to best gauge the impacts of future scenarios to achieve goals.

Mr. Reardon explained that, based on interviews with the cities of Boston, Everett, and Somerville, MAPC had identified several development focus TAZs where the cities anticipated increased development above the RTP forecasts<sup>1</sup>.

- Focus areas identified by Everett included: a) Lower Broadway Economic Development District, b) Commercial Triangle, c) Everett Square, and d) Riverside industrial area.
- Focus areas identified by Boston included: a) Sullivan Square Public Parcels, b) Rutherford Avenue, c) Roland Street District, d) Bunker Hill Mall, e) One Charlestown, and f) Navy Yard.
- Focus areas identified by Somerville included: a) Union Square, b) Boynton Yards, c) Brickbottom, d) Inner Belt, e) GLX stations, and f) Assembly Square.

Ted Schwartzberg (Boston) suggested that the modelers may want to reconcile the Imagine Boston 2030 projected growth with the scenario's projections.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detailed information on the focus areas identified by the Cities, see the planned growth scenario presentation slides prepared by MAPC for the October 17, 2016 LMRWG meeting.

Mr. Reardon outlined the next steps for modeling the scenario and plans to deliver the inputs by the end of October.

### **Decision on “baseline” comparison for land use scenario and out-year**

Mr. Field led the group in a discussion to make decisions on:

- what scenario to use as the baseline against which to compare the alternatives that the group tests
- out to what year the alternatives will be forecasted

Land use baseline:

Mr. Reardon clarified for the group the differences between the two baselines:

- The no-build scenario uses the municipal control totals outlined in the Long-Range Transportation Plan
- The “planned growth” scenario uses the no-build transportation assumptions but has different land use assumptions. These different land-use assumptions include:
  - new assumptions regarding growth and development in the region, with municipal control total changes (keeping regional totals fixed, but allowing demand forecasts to drive municipal totals)
  - assumptions of different future zoning regulations in the study area
  - specific information on proposed development in parts of the study area based on interviews with Somerville, Everett, and Boston regarding planned growth in key areas

Working Group members asked for advice from the project staff regarding whether the no-build or the planned growth alternative would be preferable to use as a baseline. Mr. Reardon responded that he believed the planned growth alternative would be more accurate because of inclusion of recently updated zoning and some assumptions about future zoning changes, as well as more up-to-date planning information based on input from the Cities in the Working Group. Marc Draisen (MAPC) stated that he felt that the planned growth scenario would likely be more accurate, but expressed concern regarding assumptions that constrained development in suburban communities would necessarily translate to more development in the inner core, given that other political and regulatory obstacles could be a factor.

In response to questions from the Working Group, Mr. Reardon clarified that the planned growth scenario made new assumptions about how municipalities would update their policies to plan for and accommodate growth. The scenario maintains the same envelope for growth over all across the region as the no-build has, but provides a different break-down of growth with more detail in particular zones where the Cities have given input, rather than exclusively using the development assumptions coming out of the land use model.

The Working Group agreed to use the planned growth scenario as the baseline. Some Working Group members noted their concerns with choosing which scenario to use before seeing the results of the modeling, but they agreed to go forward with the planned growth scenario based on the information available. The group requested that the staff assist in creating a “crosswalk” between the no-build and the planned growth scenarios to help make clear how the two

models differed, which could be used to clarify differences between the models as needed. MAPC also agreed to provide a document outlining the changes in demographic and employment assumptions between the no-build and planned growth inputs.

#### Out-year comparison:

The group requested advice from the modeling staff regarding whether to analyze alternatives out to 2030 or 2040. CTPS and MAPC staff recommended using 2040. Though the 2040 forecast has more uncertainty, it is more conservative in that it shows the impacts of more growth. A 2040 forecast also allows a more typical 20-year planning horizon. The Working Group agreed to use 2040 as the horizon for the alternatives.

#### **Refining the next round of alternatives to model**

Mr. Field presented the group with a list of potential scenarios to model, based on possibilities the Working Group identified. He explained that the current list exceeded the modeling capacity for the study and that other options would likely arise. Some options will need to be removed or combined, and some scenarios may be modeled in combination with alternate land use scenarios. Mr. Field requested that Working Group members, especially the three cities, name their highest priority options to model.

Jim Gillooly (Boston) expressed Boston's strong interest in modeling underpass construction at Sullivan Square and Austin Street, to compare against the no-underpass option which is currently in the no-build. He emphasized that the comparison of this modeling with the no-build option would be useful to consider in the decision-making process for the concurrent Sullivan Square/Rutherford Avenue study that Boston is undertaking. Mr. Gillooly clarified that this scenario's land use results would not be the same as the land use results for the no-underpass option, and so analysis of alternate land use in the area may also be appropriate.

Jay Monty (Everett) stated that Everett's priority was to examine options for transit/BRT, including the Silver Line to Sullivan Square and express bus service along Broadway. He also expressed interest in modeling improved transit options, including on the Orange Line, alongside parking restrictions.

Brad Rawson (Somerville) stated that modeling TDM policy changes, including flexible work schedules, employer shuttle buses, employer-funded T-passes, and restricted parking, was the highest priority for Somerville. He expressed interest in running some infrastructure scenarios with business-as-usual policies and then running them with best-in-class TDM policies. He also expressed support for the two priorities for modeling capital improvements Boston and Everett named. Tad Read (Boston) also expressed Boston's support for modeling of parking restrictions.

Marc Draisen (MAPC) stated that TDM policies and land use changes were a priority for MAPC to run, especially considering concerns that costlier infrastructure proposals ultimately might not be funded.

The group discussed the potential benefits and challenges of modeling parking restrictions separately from other TDM policies or infrastructure scenarios. Some reasoned that isolating

the option might provide better information on its effectiveness, but others expressed concern that parking restrictions without improved transit infrastructure could pose a problem<sup>2</sup>. Some members also expressed concern that modeling parking restrictions would not provide as much new information as other modeling options, but others stated that data on the effectiveness of parking restrictions could be helpful if attempts were to be made to implement such policies.

The group discussed broadly the need to balance keeping modeling components discrete enough to discern their impacts but also running sufficient “package” models to see the impacts and efficiency gained by combining components.

Mr. Schwartzberg emphasized the importance of accounting not only for the cost of investing in projects but also costs of not pursuing projects when potential land value would be lost if improvements were not made.

The Working Group agreed to model the following:

- Sullivan Square and Austin Street underpasses down to the intersection level to compare against the no-underpass scenario in the no-build
- Preliminary, regional, high-level modeling of residential and commercial parking restrictions to determine the broad effects on mode shift and other factors.

The group requested that the project staff further refine and present to the Working Group for consideration one or more transit alternatives, to include bus line changes, Bus Rapid Transit lines, designated bus lanes, Orange Line and/or commuter rail improvements. Project staff also confirmed their plans to explore how to include TDM (flexible work schedules, employer shuttles, and employer provided T-passes) and pedestrian/bike components into other alternatives, if possible, and present options to the Working Group. Based on the Working Group’s request, CBI will poll group members for any key components listed to-date that can be removed from primary consideration due to secondary or lack of interest or likely impact.

The group agreed to use the November 7 meeting to discuss refined options and make decisions on additional alternatives to model.

Mr. Field reviewed action items and next steps leading up to the November 7 meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.

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<sup>2</sup> Ed Bromage (CTPS) explained that transit is relatively unconstrained in the transportation model. Group members expressed concern that this could pose a challenge to analyzing the effects of parking restrictions, since potential transit crowding as a result might not be apparent.